WELLINGTON GRAVE EXPLORER'S GUIDEBOOK

II

"BUREAUCRATS"

Made by Andrew McCauley in 2022.

All biographical information sourced from Te Ara - The Encyclopedia of New Zealand (teara.govt.nz) and New Zealand History - Nga Korero a Ipurangi o Aotearoa (nzhistory.govt.nz).

Cover image: Public Trust Office building on the corner of Stout Street and Lambton Quay, Wellington. Box 14. Ref: PAColl-6585-26. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.

If you have any corrections, concerns or suggestions about the information in this guidebook, or you'd like to work with me on a future one, get in touch at graves.of.wellington@gmail.com.

This guidebook will lead you on a tour around Karori Cemetery, taking you to the graves of some historical figures and telling you about their lives.

It's part of a series of guidebooks that are intended to help you discover the stories of people from our local and national history, while also giving you an excuse to explore one of Te Whanganui a Tara's historic cemeteries. It's for people who want to explore the cemetery at their own pace and in their own way.

Volume Two of the guidebook is about some of the bureaucrats that shaped our country's history.

By 'bureaucrats' I mean the people who worked in the public sector, employed by the state to contribute in some form or another to the effective functioning of our society.

I use the term deliberately for two reasons. First, because it's a general term that doesn't have a specific official meaning in relation to New Zealand's state sector. The term 'public servant' seems to be the term most commonly used in Aotearoa, but it generally refers to people working in the core public service (the Ministries and departments that carry out Government policy and generally report to ministers in the Government). But the public or state sector is much wider than that (including things like Crown Entities, local councils, schools, hospitals, police, military, the courts, and more) and I wanted to include people from these types of organisations too.

The second reason is that government workers are often unfairly maligned, and the label of 'bureaucrat' — with its connotations of people caught up in pointless pen-pushing, obstructing the lives of ordinary people with red tape — repeatedly gets used to reinforce worn out stereotypes of government workers. Part of my aim with this guidebook is to challenge these stereotypes by showing the impact some of these people had, so at the same time I want to challenge the way we describe these workers. The term 'bureaucrat' is often used and perceived as an insult, where it should be an acknowledgment of someone who's navigating the complex mechanics of government to try and achieve something for the collective good.

People often seem to think of government as being only about politicians: they're the ones we elect to make the big calls on our

behalf, and exercise judgement in line with the values and platforms on which they were elected. But those politicians rely on officials for the advice and information to make their decisions, the expertise to implement them, and the ongoing work of the people who keep the machinery of government turning so our society can function.

As you'll see from the people in this guidebook, the work of bureaucrats makes a difference in our lives and has influenced our history. You might have mixed views about the merits of exactly what they did, but you'll see that what they did — and even what they screwed up — has had an impact throughout history.

There were too many interesting and noteworthy bureaucrats to fit into one guidebook, and into one not-too-strenuous walk around the cemetery. So this volume focuses only on people buried on the south side of the cemetery. I'm intending to follow this up with another guidebook focusing on bureaucrats on the opposite side of the cemetery.

I also want to acknowledge that these are people that had biographies written about them, so they tend to be the CEOs of their time. Every one of them will have had other people working under them, whose achievements are mostly lost to history, but are no less important than those of their superiors.

How to use this guidebook

On the opposite page you'll find a map of the cemetery showing you the full tour route.

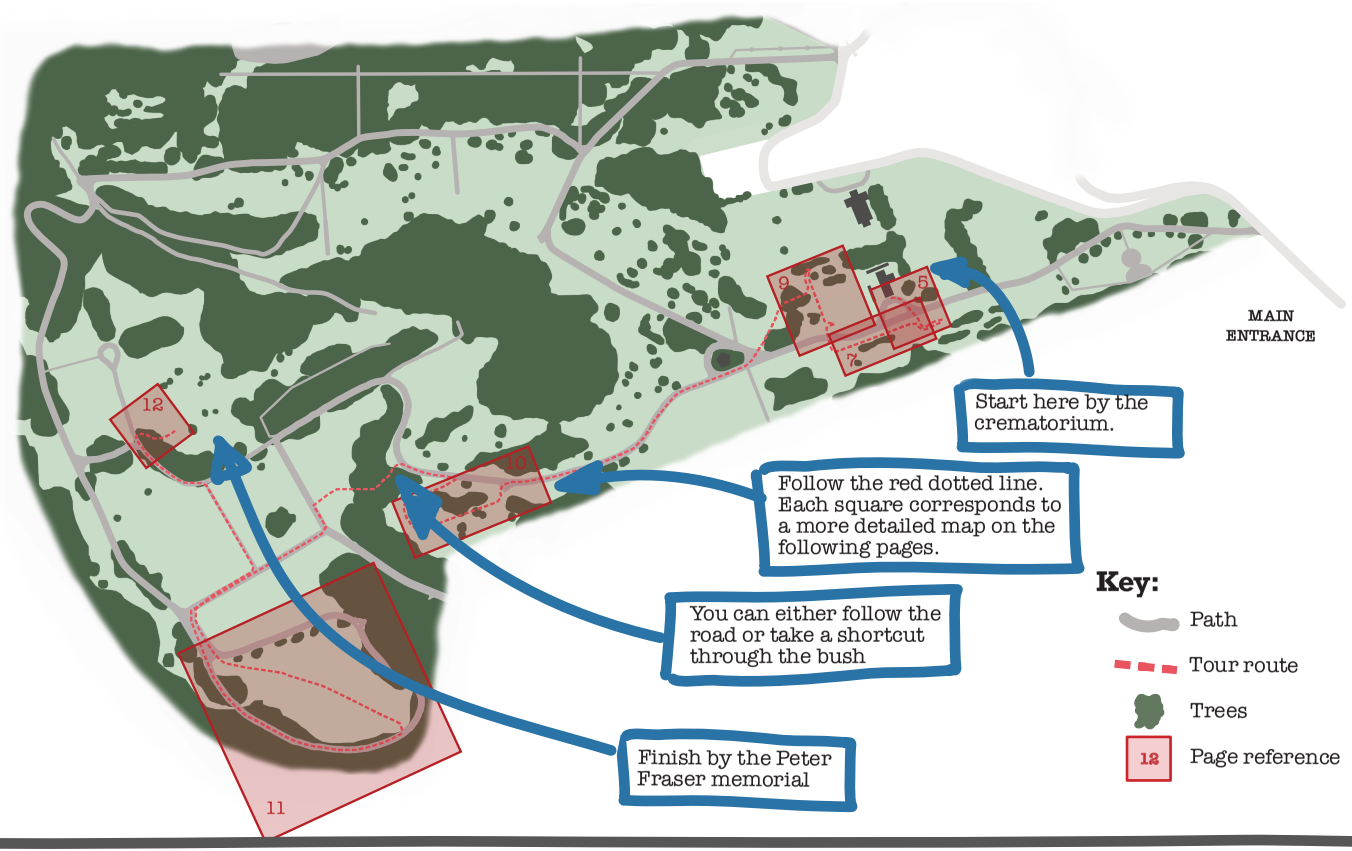
Follow the dotted line around the cemetery.

When you get to a red box, go to the corresponding page.

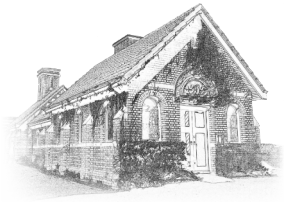
There you'll find information about a particular person, and more detailed instructions about how to find their grave -- which will be marked pink.

Note: One part of the tour (the crematorium) is only open during office hours, around 8:00am to 3:30pm weekdays.

Karori Cemetery

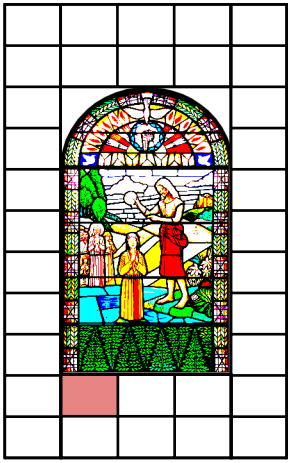


Find the crematorium. It's an old brick building that's pretty easy to spot.



You can only get inside the crematorium to see Elizabeth Grace Neill's plaque on weekdays during office hours (between about 8:00am and 3:30pm).

Go to the third window on your right. Grace's plaque is under the window.



Elizabeth Grace Neill

Grace was the first woman to hold a senior role in the New Zealand public service.

A solo mother and journalist in Queensland following the death of her husband, Grace was appointed to a royal commission on labour conditions after setting up a union for women workers. That experience saw her get recruited in March 1894 as New Zealand's first woman inspector of factories, monitoring working conditions around Aotearoa. She was the only woman working in the Government buildings at the time, but her performance in the role paved the way for an entire women's labour division to be established soon after.

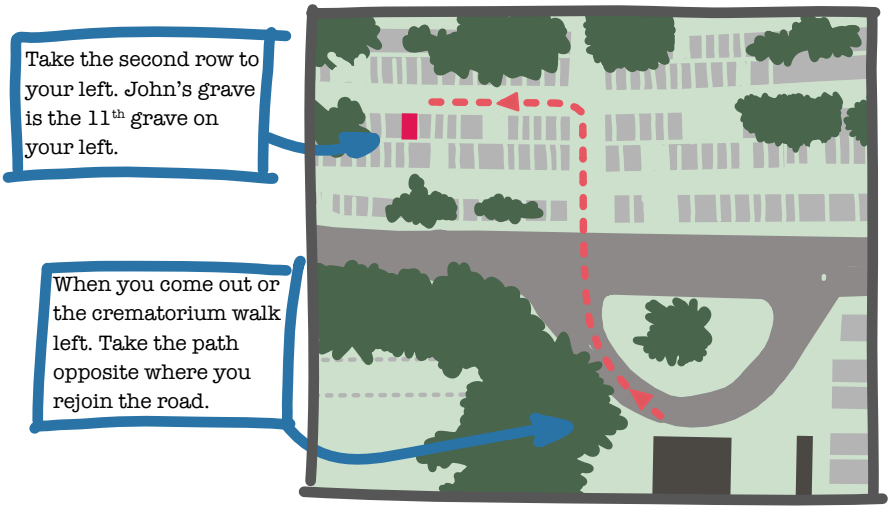
Elizabeth only stayed in the factory inspector role for a year before moving on to become the deputy inspector of lunatic asylums, hospitals, licensed houses and charitable institutions. Her role was focused on matters related to women's healthcare. In 1901 she played a major role in designing and implementing a new registration systems for nurses, then did the same for midwives in 1904 (having been qualified as both a nurse and midwife before her husband's death). She also established a collection of maternity hospitals for working class women (only the 'respectable' ones though), and after she stepped down from her government job she also did a term as head of the Children's Ward, then board member, at Wellington Hospital.

John Campbell

John might be one of Aotearoa's most iconic architects. He was the architect for the Public Works Department from 1899, and then the 'government architect' from 1909. He was in charge of the architectural design of government buildings in New Zealand until his retirement in 1922.

Campbell's designs included the Dunedin police station, the Public Trust Office in Wellington (pictured on the cover of this guidebook), and Government House. He also designed the archetypal small-town New Zealand post office building - the kind you see in just about every town in Aotearoa. He established Edwardian Baroque as the official architectural style for government buildings in New Zealand in the early twentieth century.

In collaboration with his staff he entered the competition to design the new Parliament buildings in 1911, which prompted a boycott by the New Zealand Institute of Architects who believed the government architect shouldn't have been allowed to enter. He won both first and fourth place, and the final version of the building — the one next to the Beehive that now houses the Parliamentary debating chamber — incorporated elements of both those designs. He also designed a second stage of the building that was never built, where the Beehive is now.



Reverend William Habens

William was the first person in charge of Aotearoa's national education system. After the provincial systems of education were abolished by the Education Act 1877 and the Department of Education was established, William became inspector general of schools. He also took on the job of secretary for education in 1886 and held both jobs concurrently till he died in 1899.

He developed a national syllabus, a separate syllabus for 'native schools', and a national teacher classification system. The Education Act had put in place a system of secular, compulsory education, and the years William spent in charge saw a huge increase in the proportion of children, both pakeha and Māori, who went to school — from less than half when he started the job, to almost all by the time he died.

James Allan Thomson

James was an influential geologist and scientific leader. He was the director of the Dominion Museum from 1914. From 1916 he was the first secretary of the newly established Board of Science and Art, and when the board established the New Zealand Journal of Science and Technology in 1918 he became its editor.

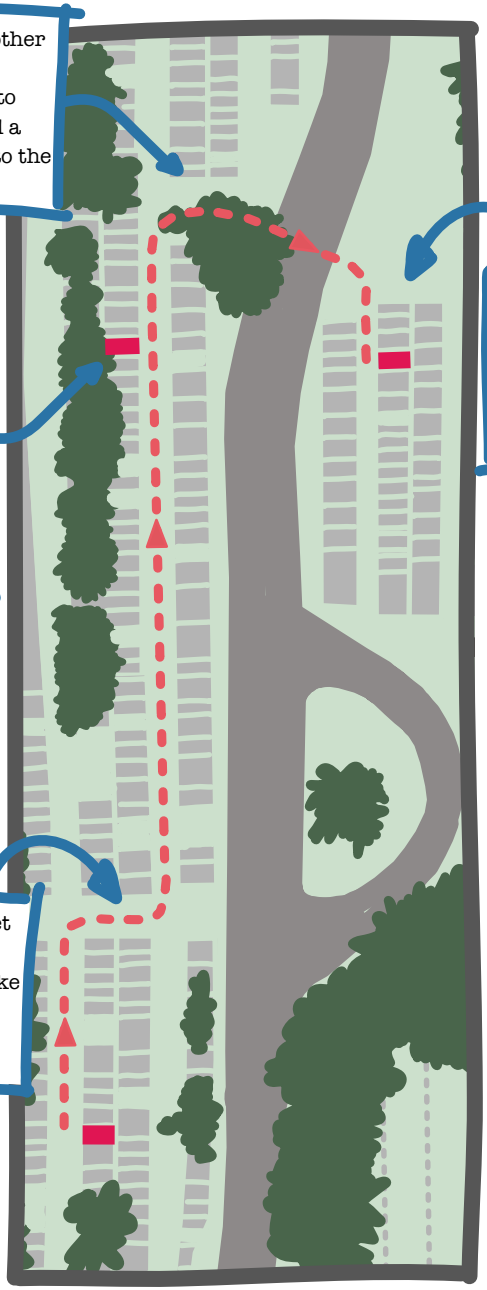
In 1923 he collaborated with his father on a review of scientific research in Aotearoa, and this review demonstrated a need for an official scientific body to provide advice to government. This became a reality three years later with the creation of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (the precursor to our current seven Crown Research Institutes).

He was also New Zealand's first Rhodes scholar, and early in his career was accepted as the geologist with Robert Falcon Scott's expedition to the Antarctic (but had to withdraw because of pulmonary tuberculosis).

Carry on for another 7 graves after William's grave to where you'll find a little path back to the road.

William's grave is the 29th on your left. It's hard to make out the inscription on the surface of the grave; mostly you can just see holes in the shape of letters where the lettering has fallen off.

Cross the road onto the path directly ahead. Then take the first row on your right. James' grave is the 4th on your left.



From John's grave get back on the path you were just on. Then take the row on your right that's closest to the road.

Charles Edward Adams

From 1910 Charles was the 'chief computer' at the head office of the Lands and Survey Department, where he devised techniques for predicting tides. From 1912 he was the government astronomer for the Internal Affairs Department.

He developed methods for working out the trajectories of planets and comets; and made observations of sunspots, variable stars, planets and auroras. He led eclipse-studying expeditions to Western Australia and Tonga. He pioneered the use of cinematography for astronomical timing, and designed a camera for accurately gauging longitudes and lunar positions.

Charles was in charge of the Hector Observatory (later the Dominion Observatory) and was responsible for maintaining the official, accurate record of the time and communicating it (by lights, and later by radio). While he was in charge the Observatory also took on responsibility for seismology, making him head seismologist for New Zealand. He helped develop the scientific practice, documenting and studying earthquakes including the major one in Hawkes Bay in 1931. He also helped establish the Carter Observatory (the one currently in use at the top of the Botanic Gardens).

Charles' grave doesn't have a name on it, just a reference number. That's because it's not just his plot, it's actually the resting place of the ashes of almost 60 other people too.

Most of the remains buried here had been cremated a few days, months or even years earlier in the Karori crematorium, but were never taken to be scattered somewhere else.

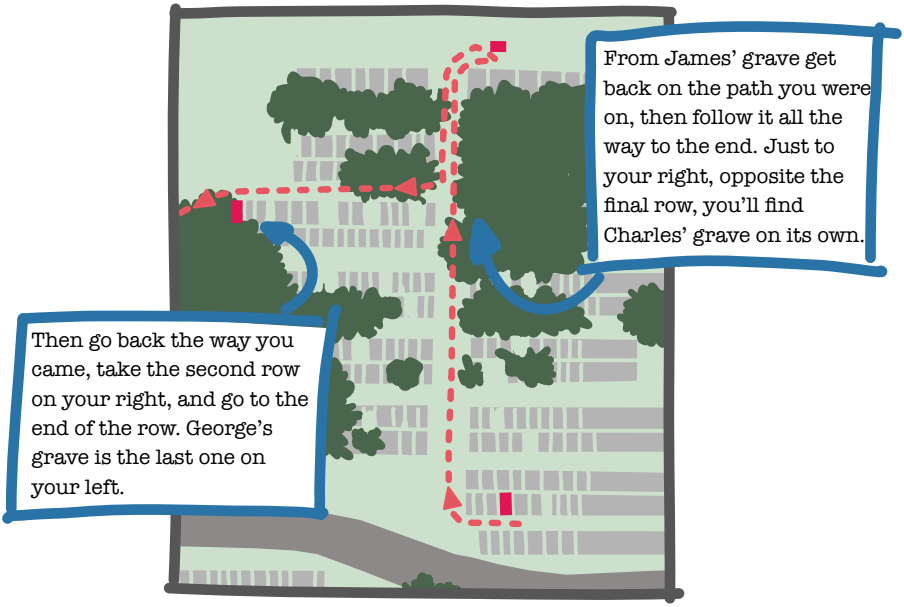
George Hogben

George was the second person to lead Aotearoa's national education system. In 1899 he became the Inspector General of Schools — the head of the New Zealand Education Department. In that role he helped two laws to be developed to improve teachers' welfare: the Public School Teachers' Salaries Act 1901, which raised teachers' pay; and the Teachers' Superannuation Bill 1902, which set up a national pension scheme for teachers.

In 1904 he reformed the primary school syllabus (the one developed by William Habens) to focus more on practical skills. To improve the quality of teaching he introduced a teacher training system in 1905 that involved teachers attending training college to gain qualifications.

George instituted a system of offering grants for pupils to attend high school free of charge, which was then expanded by the government to become a national system of universal free secondary education.

He was also an expert in seismology and founding fellow of the Royal Society.

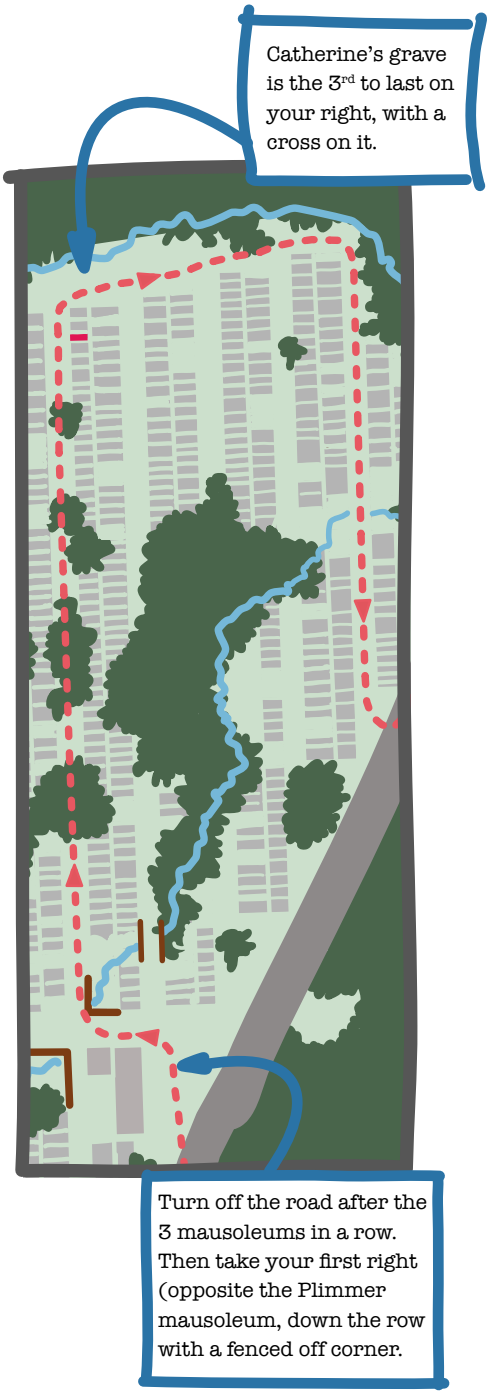


Catherine Francis

Catherine was founder and headmistress of the Mount Cook Infants' School. She opened the school in 1878, when she was also a sole parent raising four children of her own. By the following year it had about 500 children attending. Over her 27 years running the school, over 13,000 children attended.

Her approach to education drew on Friedrich Froebel's kindergarten philosophy, which was relatively new at the time (actual kindergartens weren't opened in Aotearoa until the following decade) and emphasised the importance of play in early childhood education. Catherine's school taught a whole lot of singing using the 'tonic sol-fa' method (think do-re-mi from the Sound of Music) and accompanied it with marching. She also used the 'object lesson' approach that involved the use of objects and visual aids as ways of introducing concepts.

Catherine's school was also a training facility for teachers. 238 teachers trained under her supervision, including two of her daughters, who later opened a kindergarten of their own.



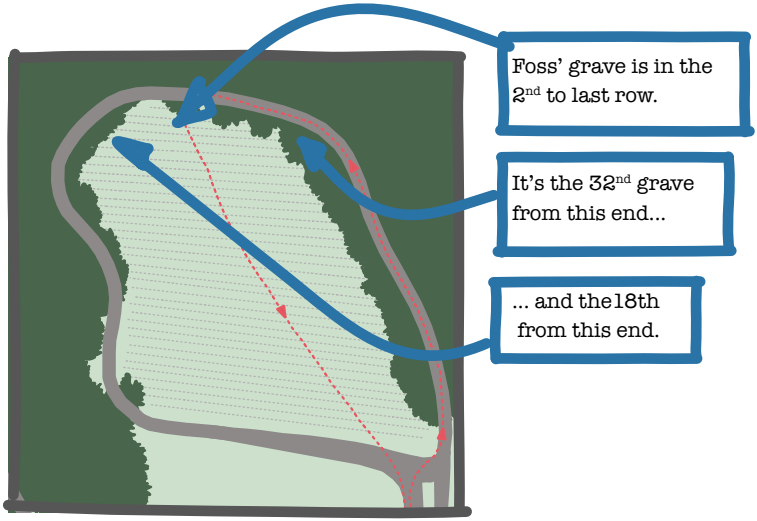
Foss Shanahan

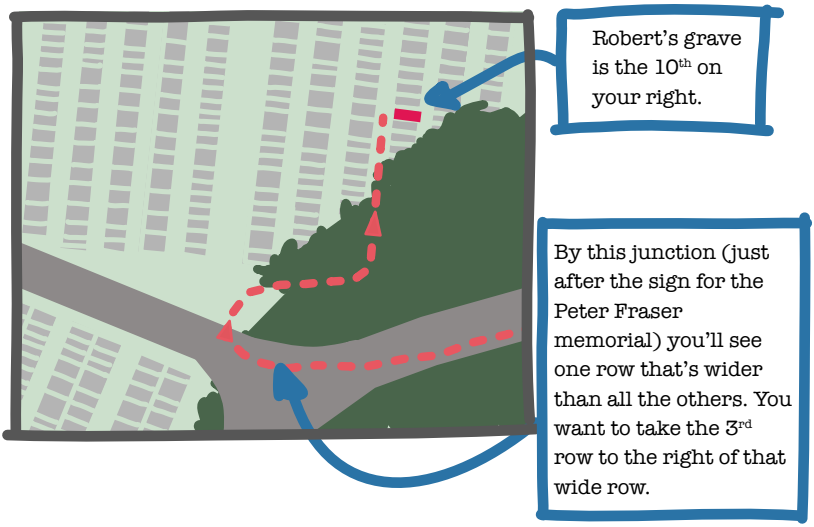
During the Second World War, Foss helped coordinate New Zealand's war planning as Assistant Secretary to the War Cabinet and Secretary to the Chiefs of Staffs Committee (made up of defence force heads).

He helped develop New Zealand's civil aviation policy. He was a member of New Zealand's delegation to the International Civil Aviation Conference in Chicago in 1944 which set up a system of global aviation regulations and standards, and an organisation governing them, which continue today.

Following the war Foss became the Cabinet secretary, and was largely responsible for establishing the Cabinet secretariat to bring more order to how Cabinet was run. The secretariat would later become the Cabinet Office that exists today. He also helped establish and oversee the Defence Secretariat, which eventually grew into today's Ministry of Defence.

He was a member of New Zealand's delegation to the United Nations General Assembly in 1949, part of the diplomatic efforts leading to New Zealand signing the ANZUS treaty, New Zealand's permanent representative at the UN, and president of the UN's Economic and Social Council (a core body of the UN tasked with advancing economic, social and environmental development).





Robert Noble Jones

Robert was the chief judge of the Native Land Court from 1919 to 1922. In this role he chaired the 1920 Native Land Claims Commission, the first major twentieth century inquiry into Maori land claims, which resulted in compensation to Ngai Tahu for land unfairly appropriated.

From 1922 he was under-secretary of the Native Department. He was responsible for a land administration programme that consolidated land titles, gave rates rebates, and provided development capital to Maori looking to develop their land into economically productive farms. After Apirana Ngata became the Native Affairs Minister in 1928 Robert was responsible for administering his land reform programme, which involved a much bigger scale of development schemes that also provided work for unemployed people in rural areas.

But it sounds like maybe he was a better judge than an administrator, and with the scale of activity the administration of his department started getting away from him. Four years later the department came under significant criticism for inadequate record-keeping, staffing shortages and allegations of inappropriate spending. Robert was replaced, but the scandal continued and eventually cost Sir Apirana Ngata his ministerial role too.